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The Adventure of The Speckled Band

BY SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

seventy-odd cases in which! have during the last eight years studied during the last eight years studied during the last eight years studied state of the during the last eight years and the during the last eight years studied state of the during the last eight years and the during the last eight years are during the last eight years and the during the last eight years are during the last eight years and the during the last eight years are during the last eight years and the during the last eight years are during the last eight years. during the last eight years studied the methods of my friend Sherlock Holmes I find many tracic control of the methods of my friend Sherlock is familiar to me," said he.

of his quick, all comprehensive glances.
"You must not fear," said he, soothingly, bending forward and patting her forearm. "We shall soon set matters right, I have no doubt. You have come in by train this morning, I see. You know me, then?"
"No; but I observe the second half a return ticket in the palm of your

The lady gave a violent start and

madam," said he, smiling. "The left arm of your jacket is spattered with mud in no less than seven places. The no vehicle safe a dogcart which throws

can stand this strain no longer;

vote the same care to your case as I did to that of your friend. As to reward, my profession is its own reward; but you are at liberty to defray whatever expenses I may be put to, at the time which sufts you best. And now I beg that you will lay before us everything that may help us in forming an opinion upon the matter."

"Alas!" replied our wiell.

replied our visitor, "the very horror of my situation lies in the fact that my fears are so vague and my suspicions depend so entirely upon small points which might seem trivial to another, that even he to whom, of all others, I have a right to look for help and advice looks upon all that I tell and advice looks upon ail that I tell him about is at the fancies of a nervous woman. He does not say so, but I can read it from his soothing answers an daverted eyes. But I have heard, Mr. Holmes, that you can see deeply into the manifold wickedness of the human heart. You may advise me how to walk amid the dangers which encounass me."

seventy-odd cases in which I have during the last eight years studied the methods of my friend Sherbock Holmes I find many tragic, some comical large number of merely strange, but none commonplace: for, working as he did, rather for the live of his art that for the acquirement of wealth, he refused to associate himself with any investigation which did not tend to ward the unusual and even the fantastic. Of all these varied cases, however, according to the control of the control of

waked up, she retorted upon me, and I on you."

"What is it, then—a fire?"

"No; a client. It seems that a young lady has arrived in a considerable state of excitement, who insists upon seeing me. She is waiting now in the sitting room. Now, when young ladies wander about the metropolis at this hour of their beds, I oresume that it is something very pressing which they have to communicate. Should it prove to be an interesting case you would. I am sure, wish to follow it from the outset. I thought, at any rate, that I should call you and give you the chance."

"My dear fellow, I would not miss it for anything."

I had no keener pleasure than in following Holmes in his professional investigations and in admiring the rapid deductions, as swift as intuitions, and yet always founded on a logical basis, with which he unravelled the problems which were submitted to him. I rapidly threw on my clothes and was ready in a few minutes to accompany my friend down to the sitting room. A lady dressed in black and heavily veiled, who had been sitting in the window, rose as we entered.

"In the etent of the etent of it and my mother died—she was killed elght years ago in a railway accident near Crewe. Dr. Roylott then abanded light years ago in a railway accident near Crewe. Dr. Roylott then abanded his attempts to establish himsear (leght years ago in a railway accident near Crewe. Dr. Roylott then abanded light years ago in a railway accident near Crewe. Dr. Roylott then abanded his attempts to establish himsear (leght years ago in a railway accident near Crewe. Dr. Roylott then abanded his attempts to establish himsear (leght years ago in a railway accident near Crewe. Dr. Roylott then abanded his attempts to establish himsear (leght years don hat the pole and the left was atond and the left was ago in a railway accident near Crewe. Dr. Roylott then abandoned his attempts to establish himsear (leght years ago in a railway accident near clearly was ago in a railway accident near clied that the mean the light years for in the

dressed in black and heavily vehed, the dressed in black and heavily vehed, as we entered.

"Good morning, madam," said Holmes, cheerily, "My name is Sherlock Holmes, This is my intimate friend and associate, Dr. Watson, before whom you can speak as freely as before myself. Ha!, I am glad to see that Mrs. Hudson has had the good sense to light the fire. Pray draw up to it, and I shall order you a cup of hot coffee, for I observe that you are shivering."

"It is not cold which makes me shiver," said the woman in a low voice, changing her seat as requested.

"What, then?"

"It is fear, Mr. Holmes, It is terror."

She raised her veil as she spoke, and we could see that she was indeed in a pitiable state of agitation, her face all drawn and gray, with restless, frightened eyes, like those of some hunted and all the features and figure were as well as the was findeed in a pitiable state of agitation, her face all drawn and gray, with restless, frightened eyes, like those of some hunted and all the features and figure were as well as the firm master.

"You can imagine from what I say that my poor sister Julia and I had the form of the could back mith over a parapet into a stream, and it was sould by paying over all the morey which I could gather together that I was able to avert another public exposure. He' had no friends at all save the wandering gypsies, and he would give these vagabonds leave to encamp upon the few acres of bramble-covered land which represent the family estate, and would accept in return the hospitality of their tents, wandering away with them sometimes for weeks on end. He has a passion also for Indian animals, which are sent over to him by a correspondent, and he has at this moment a cheetah and a baboon, which wander freely over his grounds and are feared by the villagers, almost as much as the'r master.

"You can imagine from what I say that my poor sister Julia and I had the could be a could be

"You can imagine from what I say that my poor sister Julia and I had no great pleasure in our lives. No servant would stay with us, and for a long time we did all the work of the house. She was but 30 at the time of her death, and yet her hair had already begun to whiten, even as mine has."
"Your sister is dead, then?"
"She blied just two years ago, and if

little likely to see anyone of our own age and position. We had, however, an aunt, my mother's maiden sister, Miss Honoria Westphall, who lives near Harrow, and we were occasionally allowed to pay short visits at this lady's house. Julia went there at Christmas two years ago and met there half pay major of marines, to whom she became engaged. My stepfather learned of the engagement when my sister returned and offered no objection to the marriage; but within a fort-night of the day which had been fixed

"Pray be precise as to details," he

shall go mad if it continues. I have no one to turn to—none, save only one, who cares for me; and he, poor fellow, can be of little aid. I have heard of you, Mr. Holmes; I have heard of you, Mr. Holmes; I have heard of you from Mrs. Farintosh, whom you helped the save of that dreadful time is seared into my memory. The mannor house is, as I have already said, very old, as I have heard of your from Mrs. Farintosh, whom you helped ground floor, the sitting rooms be the central block of the building these bed rooms the first is Dr.

sir, do you not think that you could help me, too, and at least throw a little light through the dense darkness which surrounds me? At present it is out of my power to reward you for your services, but in a month or six weeks I shall be married, with the control of my own income, and then at least you shall find me not ungrateful."

Holmes turned to his desk and unlocking it, drew out a small casebook, which he consulted.

"Farintosh," said he. "Ah, yes! I recall the case. It was concerned with an opal tiara. I think it was before your time, Watson. I can only say, maden, that I shall be here. The windows of the three rooms open out upon the lawn. That fatal night Dr. Roylott had gone to his room terified to rest, for my sister was troubled by the smell of the strong Indian cigars which it was his custom to smoke. She left her room, therefore, and came into mine, where she sat for and came into mine, where she sat for some time, chatting about her approaching wedding. At 11 o'clock she rose to leave me, but she paused at the door and looked back.

"I suppose that you could not pos-sibly whistle, yourself, in your sleep?" "Certainly not. But why?" "Because during the last few nights I have always, about 3 in the morning heard a few, clear whistle. I am a light sleeper, and it has awakened me. I cannot tell where it came from—perhaps from the next room, perhaps from the fawn. I thought that I would just ask you whether you had heard it."
"'No, I have not. It must be those wretched gypsies in the plantation."
"'Very likely. And yet if it were on the lawn, I wonder that you did not hear it also."

'Ah, but I sleep more heavily than

how to walk amid the dangers which encompass me."

"I am all attention, madam."

"My name is Helen Stoner, and I am closed my door, and a few moments living with my stepfather, who is the last survivor of one of the oldest Saxon

"Indeed!" said Holmes. "Was it your



ALTO THE DESIGNATION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PR I Saw My Sister Appear at the Opening.

"Your sister is dead, then?"

"She died just two years ago, and it is of her death that I wish to speak to you. You can understand that, living the life which I have described, we were it thought that she had not recognized me, but as I her she suddenly sh ognized me, but as I bent over her she suddenly shrieked out in a voice which I shall never forget: "Oh, my God, Helen! It was the band! The speckled band!" There was something else which she would fain have said, and she stabbed with her finger into the air in the direction of the doctor's room, but a fresh convulsion seized her and a fresh convulsion seized her and choked her words. I rushed out, calling loudly for my stepfather, and I met him hastening from his room in his dressing-gown. When he reached my stepfather, and the control of the co ressing-gown. When he reached n ister's side she was unconscious, an

> oner asked me at the inquiry. It is my strong impression that I heard it, and yet, among the crash of the gale and yet, among the crash of the gaie and the creaking of an old house. I may possibly have been deceived." "Was your sister dressed?" "No, she was in her night-dress. In her right hand was found the charred

> stump of a match, and in her left a

"Showing that she had struck a light and looked about her when the alarm took place. That is important. And what conclusions did the Coroner come

"He investigated the case with great are, for Dr. Roylott's conduct had ong been notorious in the county, but he was unable to find any satisfactory cause of death. My evidence showed that the door had been fastened upon the inner side, and the windows were blocked by old fashioned shotters with broad iron bars, which were secured every night. The walls were carefully sounded and were shown to be quite solid all round, and the flooring was also thoroughly examined, with the same result. The chimney is wide but same result. "And you may expect us early in the afternoon. It myself have some small business matters to attend to Will business matters to attend to Will you not wait and breakfast?"

"No: I must go. My heart is lightened already since I have confided my troubles to you. I shall look forward to seeing you again this afternoon." She dropped her thick veft over her face and clided from the room. "Yes, sir, that Grimesby Roy! "And what do you think of it all, Watson?" asked Sherlock Holmes, leaning back in his chair. "It seems to me to be a most dark and sinister business." "Dark enough and sinister enough." "There's the vipointing to a it is barred up by four large stables, It is certain, therefore, that my sister was quite alone when she met her end. Besides, there were no marks of any

"What do you think that this untortunate lady died of, then?"
"It is my belief that she died of pure fear and nervous shock, though what it was that frightened her I cannot imagine."
"Were there gypsies in the plantation at the time?"
"Yes, there are nearly always some "Was, there are nearly always some "What becomes, then, of these nocturnal whistles, and what of the very peculiar words of the dying woman?"

"Ah, and what did you gather from this allusion to a band—a speckled band?"

Sometimes I have thought that it was merely the wild talk of delirium, sometimes that it may have referred to some band of people, perhaps to

ing for help, her whole figure swaying to and fro like that of a drunkard. I ran to her and threw my arms around her, but at that moment her knees seemed to give way, and she fell to the ground. She writhed as one who is in terrible pain, and her limbs with the one object of seeing you and ith the one object of seeing you and

"Mis Roylott, you have not. You

re screening your stepfather."
"Why, what do you mean?"
For answer Holmes pushed back the frill of black lace which fringed the hand that lay upon our visitor's knee. Five little livid spots, the marks of four fingers and a thumb, were printed You have been cruelly used," said

The lady colored deeply and covered over her injured wrist. "He is a hard man," she baid, "and perhaps he hardly knows his own strength." There was a long silence, during which Holmes leaned his chin upon his

ands and stared into the crackling

"This is a very deep business," he said at last. "There are a thousand details which I should desire to know before I decide upon our course of ac-tion. Yet we have not a moment to lese. If we were to come to Stoke Moran today, would it be possible for

Meran today, would it be possible for us to see over these rooms without the knowledge of your stepfather?"
"As it happens, he spoke of coming into town today upon some important business. It is probable that he will be away all day, and that there would be nothing to disturb you. We have a housekeeper now, but she is old and foolish, and I could easily get her out of the way."

of the way."
"Excellent. You this trip, Watson?"

be nothing to disturb you. We have a housekeeper now, but she is old and foolish, and I could easily get her out of the way."

"Excellent. You are not averse to this trip, Watson?"

"By no means."

"Then we shall both come What are you going to do yourself?"

"I have one or two things which I would wish to do now that I am in town. But I shall return by the 12 6 clock train, so as to be there in time for your coming."

"And you may expect us early in the wayside hedges were just throwing out their first green shoots, and the air was full of the pleasant smell of the moist earth. To me at least there was a strange contrast between the sweet promise of the spring and this sinister upon which we were engaged. My companion sat in the front of the trap, his arms folded, his hat pulled down over his eyes, and his chin sunk upon his breast, buried in the deepest thought. Suddenly, however, he started, tapped me on the shoulder, and pointed over the meadows.

"Look there!" said he. And you may expect us early in the

A heavily timbered park stretched up in a gentle slope, thickening into a grove at the highest point. From amid

gables and high roof-tree of a very old mansion.

"Stoke Moran?" said he.

"Yes, sir, that be the house of Dr. Grimesby Roylott." remarked the there," said Holmes; "that is where

we are going."
"There's the village," said the driver, "There's the village," said the driver, pointing to a cluster of roofs some distance to the left: "but if you want to get to the house, you'll find it shorter to get over this stile, and so by the footpath over the fields. There it is, where the lady is walking."

"And the lady. I fancy is Miss Stoner," observed Holmes shading his eyes, "Yes, I think we had better do as you suggest."

We got off, paid our fare, and the

catching a train for Leatherhead, where we hired a trap at the station inn, and drove for four or five miles through the lovel? Surrey lanes. It was a perfect day, with a bright sun and a few fleecy

culiar words of the dying woman?"
I cannot think."
When you combine the ideas of the "When you combine the ideas of the whistles at night, the presence of a band of gypsies who are on intimate terms with this old doctor, the fact that we have every reason to believe low should think we had come here

I do not know whether the spotted handkerchiefs which so many of them wear over their heads might have suggested the strange adjective which she used."

Holmes shook his head like a man who is far from being satisfied.

"These are very deep waters," said he. "Pray go on with your narrative."

"But what, then, did the gypeics de"."

I that the doctor has an interest in preventing his stepdaughter's marriage, the dying allusion to a band, and, finally, the fact that Miss Helen Stoner heard a metallic clang, which might have been as good as our word."

Our client of the morning had hurried bars which secured the shutters falling into their place, I think that there is good ground to think that the mystery may be cleared along those lines."

"But what, then, did the gypeics de"." these very gypsies in the plantation. I that the doctor has an interest in pre-I do not know whether the spotted venting his stepdaughter's marriage, handkerchiefs which so many of them wear over their heads might have sug-finally, the fact that Miss Helen Stoner we have been as good as our word."

"Exactly so. But I am now sleeping in the middle one."

"Pending the alterations, as I understand. By the way, there does not seem to be any very pressing need for repairs at that end wall."

"There were none. I believe it was an excuse to move me from my room."

"Ah! that is suggestive. Now, on the other side of this narrow wing runs the corridor from which these three rooms open.1 There are windows in it, of course?" "Holmes, the busybody!"
His smile broadened.
"Holmes, the Scotland Yard Jack-inffice!"

"Holmes, the basybody."

"As it is not broadened."

Holmes chuckled heartily, "You conversation is most entertaining."

Holmes chuckled heartily, "You conversation is most entertaining."

There are windows in it.

"Tee, but very small ones. Too narrow of the conversation is most entertaining."

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"Tee, but very small ones. Too narrow of the conversation is most entertaining."

"As you tool locked your doors at a fine of the conversation is most entertaining."

As you tool locked your room and but your room and star to media with my application of the conversation is an application of the conversation is an application of the conversation of the conversation is an application of the room. The strong out of the room.

Satisf Holmes, laughing, "Laim not quite so bulky, but if the had regulated in might have shown him that, my grip-own." As he spoke he policed up the strong out of the room.

Satisf Holmes, laughing, "Laim not quite so bulky, but if the had regulated in the steel poker, and with a sudden effort straightened it out on insection in the steel poker, and with a sudden effort straightened it out on insection of the room in the straightened it out on insection in the straightened it out on insection in the straight of the conversation, however, and I only trust that the conversation is an application, however, and I only trust that the conversation is a straight of the conversation, however, and I only trust that the conversation is a straight of the conversation, however, and I only trust that the conversation is a straight of the conversation, however, and I only trust that the conversation is a straight of the conversation, however, and I only trust that the conversation is a straight of the conversation, however, and I only trust that the conversation is a straight of the conversation, and in the conversation is a straight of the conversation, however, and I only trust that the conversation is a straight of the conversatio

meaning I have been obliged to work out the present prices of the investments with which it is concerned. The total income, which at the time of the wife's death was little short of £1,100, is now, through the fall in agricultural prices, not more than £750. Each daughter can claim an income of £250, in case of marriage. It is evident, therefore, that if both girls had married, this beauty would have had a mere pittance, while even one of them would cripple him to a very serious extent. My morning's work has not been wasted, since it has proved that he has the very strongest motives for standing in the way of anything of the sort. And now, Watson, this is too serious for dawdling, especially as the old man is aware that we are interesting ourselves in his affairs; so if you are ready, we shall call a cab and drive to Watson, to the standard had been wasted.

upon the pillow,
"It goes to the housekeeper's room."
"It looks newer than the other "Your sister asked for it. I suppose?"
"No. I never heard of her using it.
We always used to get what we wanted

'Indeed, it seemed unnecessary to put "Indeed, it seemed unnecessary to put so nice a bell-puil there. You will excuse me for a few minutes while I satisfy myself as to this floor." He threw himself down upon his face with his lens in his hand, and crawled swiftly backward and forward, examining minutely the cracks between the boards. Then he did the same with the

boards. Then he did the same with the woodwork with which the chamber was panelled. Finally he walked over to the bed, and spent some time in staring at it, and in running his eye up and down the wall. Finally he took the bell rope in his hand and gave it a brisk tug.

"Why, it's a dummy," said be.

"Won't it ring?"
"No, it is not even attached to a wire. This is very interesting. You can see now that it is fastened to a hook just above where the little opening for the ventilator is."
"How very absurd! I never noticed that before."

two very singular points about this room. For example, what a fool a builder must be to open a ventilator into another room, when, with the same trouble, he might have communicated if deduced a ventilator."

I deduced a ventilator."

But what harm can there be in that?" That is also quite modern," said the that

ges carried out about that time."
"They seem to have been of a most interesting character—dummy bell-ropes, and ventilators which do not ventilate. With your permission, Miss

Stoner, we shall carry our researches into the inner apartment."

Dr. Grimesby Roylott's chamber was larger than that of his stepdaughter, but was as plainly furnished. A campbed, a small wooden shelf full of books, mostly of a technical character, an arm-chair beside the bed, a plain wooden chair against the wall, a round table, and a large iron safe were the principal things which met the eye. Holmes walked slowly round and ex-amined each and all of them with the

"What's in here" he asked tapping

"My stepfather's business papers,"
"Oh, you have seen inside," then?"
"Only once, some years ago. I remember that it was full of papers."
"There isn't a cat in it, for example?"
"No. What a strange idea!"
"Well, look at this!" He took up a small saucer of milk which stood on the top of it.

the top of it.

"No, we don't keep a cat. But there is a cheetah and a baboon."

"Ah, yes, of course! Well, a cheetah is just a big cat, and yet a saucer of milk does not go very far in satisfying its wants. I dare say. There is one point which I should wish to determine." He squatted down in front of the wooden chair, and examined the seat of it with greatest attention.

"Thank" you, that is quite settled." said he, rising and putting his lens in his pocket. "Hello! Here is something interesting!"

interesting!"

The object which had caught his eye was a small dog-lash hung on one corner of the bed. The lash, however, was curled upon itself, and tied so as to make a loop of whip-cord.

"What do you make of that, Watson?"

"It's a common enough lash. But I "It's a common enough lash. But I don't know why it should be tied."

don't know why it should be tied."

"That is not quite so common, is it? Ah. me! it's a wicked world, and when a clever man turns his brains to crime it is the worst of all. I think that I have seen enough now, Miss Stoner, and with your permission we shall walk out upon the lawn."

I had never seen my friend's face so grim or his face so dark as it was when we turned from the scene of this investigation. We had walked several times up and odwn the lawn, neither Miss Stoner nor myself liking to break upon his thoughts before he roused himself from his reverie.

"It is very essential, Miss Stoner."

"It is very essential, Miss Stoner," said he, "that you should absolutely follow my advice in every respect."
"I shall most certainly do so."

"The matter is too serious for any nesitation. Your life may depend upon assure you that I am in your

"In the first place, both my friend and I must spend the night in your Both Miss Stoner and I gazed at him

both Miss Stoner and I gazed at him in astonishment,
"Yes, it must be so. Let me explain! I believe that that is the village inn over there?"
"Yes, that is the 'Crown.'"
"Very good. Your windows would be visible from there?"
"Certainly."

"You must confine yourself to your com, on pretense of a headache, when cour stepfather comes back. Then when you hear him retire for the night you

ide the bed, the tassel actually lying pon the pillow, "It goes to the housekeeper's room." It looks newer than the other hings?"

"Yes, it was only put there a couple f years ago."

"Your sister asked for it. I suppose?"

"No. I never heard of her using it. "Your slaves used to get what we wanted or curselves."

"Can I be of assistance?"

"Your presence might be invaluable."

Your presence might be invaluable.
"Then I shall certainly come."
"It is very kind of you."
"You speak of danger. You have evi

"You speak of danger. You have evidently seen more in those room than was visible to me."
"No. but I fancy that I may have deduced a little more. I imagine that you saw all that I did."
"I saw nothing remarkable save the bell rope, and what purpose that could answer I confess is more than I can

'You saw the ventilator, too? "Yes, but I do not think that it is such a very unusual thing to have a small opening between two rooms. It was so small that a rat could hardly

"I knew that we should find a ven-

hook just above where the little opening for the ventilator is."

"How very absurd! I never noticed that before."

"Very strange!" muttered Holmes, pulling at the rope, "There are one or two very singular points about this room. For example, what a fool a builder must be to open a ventilator into another room, when, with the same trouble have companied to the coroner's inquiry.

"That is also quite incidence of dates. A ventilator is made, a cord is hung, and a lady who sleeps in the bed dies. Does not that ges carried out about that time."

"Well, there is at least a curious incidence of dates. A ventilator is made, a cord is hung, and a lady who sleeps in the bed dies. Does not that ges carried out about that time." Well, there is at least a curious co-

"I cannot as yet see any connec-

"Did you observe anything very pe-"It was clamped to the floor. Did you ever see a bed fastened like that be-fore?"

fore?"
"I cannot say that I have."
"The lady could not move her bed. It must always be in the same relative position to the ventilator and to the rope—for so we may call it since it was clearly never meant for a bell-pull."
"Holmes," I cried. "I seem to see simly what you are hinting at. We are only just in time to prevent some sub-tle and horrible crime."

Continued on Page 3.